



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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GOVERNOR

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STEPS IT UP
TO PROMOTE HEALTHY LIFESTYLES**

HONOLULU – Building on the state’s ongoing efforts to encourage Hawai’i residents to take personal responsibility for improving their health by being regularly physically active, the Hawai’i State Department of Health (DOH) will re-launch the “Step It Up, Hawai’i!” public health awareness campaign on Feb. 26. The outreach will include a series of television and radio announcements, “Step It Up, Hawai’i!” walking events statewide, and community workshops to promote active living.

The statewide walking campaign, which launched in 2007, urges adults (ages 35 – 55) to walk 30 or more minutes a day. The U.S. Surgeon General recommends walking each day to help relieve stress and reduce the risk for numerous chronic diseases, such as heart disease, which is Hawai’i’s leading cause of death. Additionally, separating the walks into three short 10-minute walks still provides the health benefits of a continuous 30-minute walk.

“Everyone can lead a healthy lifestyle one step at a time,” Lt. Governor James R. “Duke” Aiona, Jr. said. “Small, achievable, healthy lifestyle changes, such as taking walks during breaks or using the stairs, have a cumulative effect that can add up to big health benefits. ‘Step It Up, Hawai’i!’ reminds residents to take personal responsibility for living healthier, more active lives.”

“As public health officials, we are focused on helping Hawai’i residents lead active, healthy lifestyles. ‘Step It Up, Hawai’i!’ is one part of a multi-faceted approach,” said Director of Health Chiyome Fukino, M.D. “With our partners, we created a strategic plan for improving physical activity and nutrition in our state. We are also increasing opportunities in the community for active living through numerous workshops that present best practices in living healthy.”

As part of the DOH walking campaign, District Health Offices on Hawai'i, Maui and Kaua'i are sponsoring lunchtime walks on Tuesday, February 26, 2008. The 30 minute walks will start at 12 noon at the State Office Buildings in Kahului, Maui, and Hilo, Hawai'i and the Kauai County Building in Lihue, Kauai. Walking at lunch is one of the ways the DOH suggests working adults fit 30 or more minutes of walking into their busy schedules.

In conjunction with the "Step It Up, Hawai'i!" campaign, DOH will be sponsoring Active Living Community Workshops on the Leeward Coast of O'ahu. Four community-based workshops in 'Ewa, Kapolei, Nanakuli and Makaha will share how citizens can make it easier and safer to bike and walk in their neighborhoods. Call 586-4495 or e-mail heidi.hansen-smith@doh.hawaii.gov to sign up for one of the Active Living Workshops:

- Makaha Elem. School – 3/15/08, 9 am - 11 am
- Nanaikapono Elem. School (Nanakuli) – 3/17/08, 7 pm - 9 pm
- Keone'ula Elem. School (Ewa) – 3/17/08, 7 pm - 9 pm
- Kapolei High School – 3/17/08, 7 pm - 9 pm

For more information on the "Step It Up, Hawai'i!" walking campaign, Active Living Community Workshops and the Hawai'i Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan visit www.healthyhawaii.com.

"Step It Up, Hawai'i!" is the latest component of the Department of Health's statewide health promotion campaign called "Start Living Healthy," which is part of DOH's Healthy Hawai'i Initiative (HHI). The ongoing campaign has also included targeted messages to promote health lifestyles, such as "Fruits & Veggies. Good Choice!" (2007), "1% or Less (milk) is Best" (2004 & 2005) and the "You Gotta Start Somewhere" (2002 & 2003). In 1999, the Department of Health created HHI with a portion of Hawai'i's tobacco settlement funds. HHI focuses on the promotion of physical activity, good nutrition and living tobacco-free to reduce the burden of chronic diseases and to increase years of healthy life.

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Web album of walking photos available online at:
<http://picasaweb.google.com/HawaiiDOH/StepItUpHawaiiWalkingPhotos>

For more information, please contact:

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